

From: Joseph Manojlovich
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 12:43pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom It May Concern:

I am taking the time to write this email to voice my concern over the proposed Microsoft antitrust settlement. I am a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh School of Information Sciences, and also a consumer of computer products. As both an information technology specialist and a consumer, I feel that Microsoft has caused great harm, and this proposed settlement in my opinion does very little to prevent current and future antitrust violations by Microsoft. In fact, the numerous loopholes in the current agreement may very well increase Microsoft's power in certain markets.

I may not be a legal expert, but I fail to understand how this settlement falls within the realm of established crime and punishment. When somebody robs a bank, and are subsequently caught, they not only pay back all the stolen money and goods, but are fined and imprisoned. If a large company steals billions from consumers by leveraging their monopolies, they should be forced to repay their illegal gains and also divest themselves of their monopolies. This proposed settlement is hardly a punishment for Microsoft, and will allow them to continue to dominate current and new markets, adding their illegal profits to an ever-growing war chest that runs in the tens of billions of dollars now.

In my opinion, the proposed settlement is simply an illogical attempt to help the current economy by letting a large company off with a slap on the wrist. It does nothing to curb current and future illegal behavior by Microsoft, and certainly provides nothing in the way of reprimands for past illegal behavior. A much better way to help this weak economy would be to really punish Microsoft: break up their monopolies, and return their ill-gotten gains to consumers.

A settlement best serves the needs of all involved in this case. Without one, this case will continue to drag out over the next few years, with continuing antitrust violations by Microsoft. However, this proposed settlement should not be seen as a solution.

Let us not forget history. Microsoft is in this antitrust trial only because they willfully violated a consent decree that was a settlement in a past antitrust trial. Microsoft will violate this settlement 5 minutes after the signatures are dried. They are a predatory company that cannot compete without violating the law. As an American citizen, I vote to reject this proposed settlement and replace it with one that will both punish Microsoft and restore real competition to the marketplace.

Sincerely,

Joseph Manojlovich